THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) The rate of interest for the Employees' Provident Fund subscribers for the year 2002-2003 was 9.5% per annum. The rate of interest for the current financial year has not been declared so far.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The recommendations of the Financial and Investment Committee are yet to be received by the Central Board of Trustees, Employees Provident Fund.

(e) It is not possible to give a definite time frame for the decision on the matter.

(f) Under Para 60 of Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952, recommendation about declaration of rate of interest is made by the Central Board of Trustees (EPF) and thereafter central Government determines the rate of interest.

Lifting Restrictions on Employment of Contract Workers

3677. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to lift restrictions on employment of contract workers in certain identified sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the licence regime in respect of the labour contractors, is also proposed to be removed;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government have proposed inbuilt mechanism to check exploitation of the labour class by unscrupulous contractors; and

(f) if so, what are the safety measures proposed by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) to (d) In the wake of economic liberalisation, the Government have undertaken a review of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970. The details of the amendment which may be made in the said Act have not been finalised.

(e) and (f) Adequate provisions to prevent exploitation of contract labour by contractors like responsibility for payment of wages, welfare and health facilities to workers on the part of principal employer in case of default by the contractor to provide these amenities etc. already exist in the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970.

Ravindra Verma Commission

3678. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1744 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 5th December, 2002 and state:

(a) the details of the recommendations of Ravindra Verma Commission which have been accepted and those turned down; and

(b) the reasons for turning down or partially rejecting the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) The Second National Commission on Labour has made wide ranging recommendations on various facets of labour *viz.* review of laws, social security, women and Child labour, skill development, wages, labour administration, unorganised sector etc. The Ministry has held consultations and interactions with the workers' representatives, employers' organizations, experts, professionals etc. The recommendations of the Commission were discussed in the 38th Session of ILC held on 28-29 September, 2002 and in a Tripartite meeting held on 18-19 February, 2003 at V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA. Such steps are being taken to bring about a workable consensus for implementation of the recommendations of the Commissions.

Non-payment of Wages

†3679. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that salary to the labourers who are performing their duties continuously inspite of their serious illness, is not being paid by his Ministry for the last several years;

(b) if so, the number and category of the said labourers and the reasons for non-payment of their salaries;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.